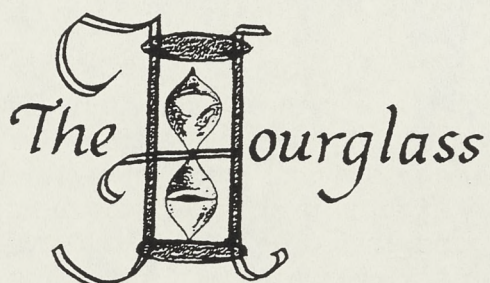


Historical Society of Palm Desert

P.O. Box 77

Palm Desert, CA 92261

(760) 346-6588



Community

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IN APPRECIATION OF ANDY

They are kindred spirits.....Andy then and Betsy now.....though they never knew each other, never even met. With gentle treatment and patience both of them won the affection and loyalty of four-footed creatures who could be very stubborn. We are talking about donkeys. Since they were domesticated in Egypt before 3000 B.C., these animals have served mankind as sure-footed beasts of burden all over the world.

Andrew Rolan preferred to be called "Andy the Donkey Man," a name he earned in Palm Desert's history by giving donkey rides to small children for 50¢ each. He would spend eight to nine months each year camped near what is now the intersection of Highway 111 and Fred Waring at Painters Path. With his little covered wagon, a string of donkeys and a collection of stray dogs he would return to the Lake Hemet area near Idylwild via Highway 74, where he stayed during the summer months.

Besides the adulation of the valley's youngsters, Andy had one other claim to fame. Three months before his death, he was interviewed by Charles Kuralt and his CBS-TV camera crew for the "On the Road" show which was viewed nation-wide. Two sad accidents occurred in Rolan's life. In August of 1969 the entourage was struck by a driver who didn't see them in the evening shadows while traveling along Highway 74. Four of his eleven donkeys were killed, his portable home damaged, his small riding saddle stolen by thieves, and Andy was hospitalized for a couple months with severe injuries. Then in 1974 on New Year's Day, though he had been repeatedly warned about the danger of walking on Highway 111 by the police, Andy was struck by a car and killed.

"Andy the Donkey Man" provided valley locals the undeniable joy that comes when we decide to give without hope of receiving anything in return. Kids collected cans of dog food for his pet canines, the Eldorado Polo Club would drop off bales of hay for his quadrupeds, people would hand him a couple extra bucks. The Lions Club of Cathedral

ANDY (continued):

City and private individuals provided the funds for a cataract operation in 1962, the Salvation Army saw to it that he got false teeth. After his accident the Los Compadres -- a riding club, the DMV, the CHP and Valley Equipment Rentals coordinated their efforts to move Andy's group up and down the mountain in the proper season. He had a rent free camp ground, then progress began to intrude into Andy's simple existence; like when a county ordinance was passed forbidding campfires. The few restaurants in the area could usually be counted on for a free meal.

When Andy was killed, the manager of the Polo Club began a fund-raising campaign with the help of Evelyn Young to give the old cowboy a proper burial. They ended up with enough for a memorial service at the Palm Desert Community Church, the burial and a headstone. The rest of the money was placed in a trust fund where it earned interest and was used to purchase a double-jet drinking fountain for the smaller children at George Washington Elementary School in 1980. A bronze plaque dedicates it to the memory of "Andy the Donkey Man."

Yours truly had the bright idea that the Society should sponsor an Andy and his donkey entry in this year's Golf Cart Parade.....so we needed a donkey. Hal and Angie Rover interviewed Bob and Betsy Cockroft who live in Cahuilla Hills and own four donkeys. In a phone conversation with Betsy, she provided me with interesting information about donkeys and their behavior. Her miniature donkey is the only one who is "street smart" (used to traffic) and the only possible candidate for the parade route, but he has to be given a job like pulling a two-wheeled cart; otherwise, he would be munching the pansies in the median or begging a by-stander for a drink of Coke. Since this didn't fit in with the historic scenario for the Donkey Man, we decided to forgo the plan.

When they were considering a fitting memento for Andy back in 1980, a statue of him with a donkey was suggested but it was not practical at the time. That's our dream here at the Society too. Maybe someday Palm Desert's public art will include such a sculpture.

Donkey Trivia

The male donkey is called a jack; the female is a jennet. Crossbreeding a donkey and a horse produces an offspring that has good qualities of both parents. Its size is that of a horse and it has the endurance of a donkey. A hinny is the offspring of a stallion (male horse) and a jennet; a mule is the offspring of a mare (female horse) and a jack. Neither hinnies nor mules can reproduce.

Darlene Romano, COD's Fine Arts Division Chair, is writing both the music and the book for La Quinta's On Stage pageant, "Night of a Thousand Stars." It is based on the Coachella Valley's history and will star **Howard Keel**. This famous Palm Desert resident thinks he is singing better now than he did back in the 50's when he was the king of MGM musicals. The show will feature more than 50 local performers, including children and professionals. Casting begins this summer and the show will appear at the PGA West tennis complex next Fall.

Historical Society of Palm Desert
SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES & MEETINGS
2000

Oct. 2,5,9,12	Mini-Muster • Jan Holmlund, Dan & B.J. Callahan, volunteers
Oct. 18 *	Full Board Meeting (old & new board members), 8:30 am
Oct. 19	Mini-Muster Awards - Indian Wells
Oct. 25	Fall Luncheon / Installation • Mary Safe
Oct. 26	Mini-Muster Awards - Palm Desert
Nov. 12	Fire Engine #1 in <u>Golf Cart Parade</u> w/Mr. & Mrs. Santa
	• Roger Keezer, Doloris Driskel, Gary Olesen
Nov. 13	Membership Committee meeting, 9:00 am
Nov. 14	Planning Committee meeting, 9:00 am
Nov. 15	Events & Projects Committee meeting, 9:00 am
Nov. 16	Communication & Publicity Committee meeting, 10:00 am
Nov. 27	Preservation Committee Meeting, 8:30 am
Dec. ?	Budget & Finance, House & Grounds, Executive Committee meetings
Dec. 5	Mail "Hourglass", winter issue •Ginny Folkers, Theda Lundquist
<u>2001</u>	
Jan. 22	Events & Projects Committee Meeting, 9:00 am
Jan. 23	Start work on budget for funds request from City
Jan. 24 *	Full Board Meeting, 8:30 am
Feb. 16	Open <u>New Exhibit</u> •Roger Keezer, Ginny Folkers
Mar. 2	Mail "Hourglass", spring issue •Ginny Folkers, Theda Lundquist
Mar. 25	<u>Picnic in the Park, members & guests, bring your own food, cold drinks provided</u> • Dan & B.J. Callahan
Apr. 8	<u>Springfest, booth display & pictures with fire engine</u>
	Roger Keezer, Ginny Folkers, volunteers
Apr. 25	<u>Spring Luncheon</u> • Yvonne Kelly
May 15	<u>Founder's Day</u> • Lois Bradstreet
June 4	Mail "Hourglass, summer issue •Ginny Folkers, Theda Lundquist
July	Office Closed
Aug.	Office Closed
Sept. 4	Mail "Hourglass", fall issue •Ginny Folkers, Theda Lundquist
Sept. 11	Open <u>New Exhibit</u> • Roger Keezer, Ginny Folkers
Sept. 22	<u>Fund Raiser (?)</u>
Oct. 1,4,8,11	Mini-Muster • Jan Holmlund, Dan & B.J. Callahan, Bruce Hagerman, volunteers
Oct. 17 *	Full Board Meeting, 8:30 am
Oct. 18	Mini-Muster Awards - Indian Wells
Oct. 24	Fall Luncheon • Adele & Ed Ruxton
Oct. 25	Mini-Muster Awards - Palm Desert
Nov. 11	Fire Engine #1 in <u>Golf Cart Parade</u> • Keezer, Driskel, Olesen
Nov. 15	Open <u>New Exhibit</u> •Keezer, Folkers
Nov. 28	<u>Holiday Gathering (?)</u>
Dec. 5	Mail "Hourglass", winter issue •Folkers, Lundquist
<u>2002</u>	
Jan. 16	Chamber Mixer •Bradstreet, Hagerman, Driskel

Note: In addition to the above activities, one-day tours and a chili cook-off are being planned. Mark your calendars and keep this schedule on hand.

Historical Society of Palm Desert
COMMITTEES FOR 2000 - 2002

Executive:	Emergency decision-making	•Folkers, Keezer, Bowie, Wilmeth, Callahan, Rover
Finance & Budget:	Pay bills, prepare budget, Board report, approve committee budgets	• Wilmeth, Bowie, Olesen, Yoxsimer, Folkers
Planning:	Create schedule, review committee reports, report to Board, brainstorm ideas for new events/projects/fund-raising/ membership increase	• Hollenbeck, Snyder, H. Rover, Driskel, Folkers, A. Rover (consultant)
Events & Projects:	Organize event details Mini-Muster project Report to Board	•Y. Kelly, Bradstreet, Ruxton, Folkers, Callahans, Driskel, Hagerman • Holmlund, Callahans, Hagerman • Trevor
Communication & Publicity	Press releases w/photo, radio, TV, etc. Print/distribute fliers, etc. Edit newsletters Telephoning	•Ahrens, Haas • ? •Folkers, Lundquist •Noble
Preservation:	Archival documents & collections Photos/Audio-visual projects Arrange for historical building markers Set up changing exhibits Research articles Oral archives	•Folkers, White •Keezer •Morrey, Olesen •Keezer, Folkers •Copeland • ?
Membership:	Dues statements/letters/roster Sympathy & get well cards Business memberships Report to Board Recruit volunteers, directory	• Mullins • Ernst • J. Martin • Eastes • ? , Folkers
House & Grounds:	Maintenance, repair, etc.	•Callahan, Keezer, Marshall, D. Kelly, Folkers

NOTE TO ALL MEMBERS

- Needed: volunteers for docents (training required), researchers, photo identification, mailings, computer cataloging, blueprint sorting, and more
- Do you know of any historical homes which may be available for home tours?
- Let us know of any historic sites, so we can recognize them with an historic marker.
- Try to bring in at least one new member into the Society during 2001.
- We are looking for photos of movie stars and other celebrities. Got any leads?
- We are planning an exhibit of things people collect. Do you have or know of any that would be of interest for public viewing? Use of these items would be on a loan basis. Let us know what you have as soon as possible so we can arrange for proper exhibit set-ups and security.

Please call the Society office at 346-6588 in regard to these items.

FALL LUNCHEON / INSTALLATION

This event, which was held at Desert Falls Country Club on Oct. 25, was a very enjoyable and congenial affair. Much of the credit goes to Mary Safe, who made all the arrangements before taking a trip to London with a friend. Is she Superwoman, or what?

Jean Hollenbeck sailed through her job as installation officer with dispatch. The huge chocolate medallions bestowed on Ginny Folkers, Roger Keezer, Bonnie Bowie, and Bob Wilmeth were not only beautiful gifts for the officers but delicious as well. New Board members were inducted: Barbara Keedy Eastes, Jean Ernst, Dan Kelly, Lorraine Vallat Meyer, Hal Rover, and Walter Snyder. Board members returning for the 2000-2002 term are: Caroline Berkey, Bruce Hagerman, Ginny Mullins, Gary Olesen, and Joyce White.

President Folkers explained that she garnered enthusiasm from going through old Society files and recognizing the commitment of the group of people appointed to the original Historical Commission by the City of Palm Desert. She asked the members to pitch in and make the Society just as powerful as it was back then.

Stepping down to the Past-President position, Dan Callahan was presented with a Lucite fire ax for his coffee table. It was just a small token of the appreciation the Society as a whole wanted to express for his service during the past two years as President. Dan is an excellent docent with a good head for dates, and a personal knowledge of even the most minute details as they relate to Palm Desert's history. He lived those years and he is naturally gifted to pass that knowledge on to others. Thanks, Dan! We're really not giving you the ax.....stick around.

Stan Sniff did a super job of relating his experiences of the early days in the Coachella Valley. His talk was not only informative, but amusing and astounding all at the same time. Thanks, Stan, for a great speech, and also for loaning us a copy of it for the archives and mulling over in our spare

time. We appreciate the time and care you took in its preparation.

Theda Lundquist, our social interviewer, gleaned lots of tidbits from various tables as the luncheon progressed. Helene Harrison sold her house on Fairway Drive. She will spend Thanksgiving with her family at Lake Tahoe. Mary McClain, now Melody Snyder, plays the harp and divides her time between Santa Fe, NM and Sunrise Country Club. Also at that table were Helen Cunningham, Ruth Griswold, and Charlotte Crane, Helene's church friend.

Jean Ernst brought a guest, Jessie Byers, who is the widow of Paul Byers, Palm Desert's first treasurer. Jessie and her daughter spent a week in Scotland visiting her only remaining relatives, three cousins.

Bonnie and Jack Bowie have a Silent Valley membership in the San Jacinto Mts. where they keep their fifth-wheeler 120 days each year. They entertained their grandchildren during part of their May-June-Aug. stay this year. Bonnie organizes computer generated data at the Patton Museum on Mondays. She and Jack recently celebrated their 47th anniversary. Congratulations!!

Adele and Ed Ruxton racked up a good bit of summer travel. Their two-week "Springtime in Europe" jaunt included 5 days in London. The WWII memorabilia they saw was especially enjoyable. During 5 days in Paris they heard the latest Andrew Lloyd Weber, saw The Louvre, Monet Gardens, Rheims Cathedral, etc. They rested up on a Concorde flight back to New York.

Friends Lorraine Vallat Meyer and Caroline Berkey sat at a chatty table. Caroline joined her daughter and two grandsons at their Carmel Valley ranch this summer. The boys are busy with scouting and are winners in foot racing. Another grandchild will be married in Rancho Santa Fe soon.

Everyone enjoyed this gathering. If you missed it -- we missed you. Don't forget the Spring Luncheon on April 25, 2001.

NEW MEMBERS

Patrons

Julian Lesser

Individual & Family

Raymond & Wanda Berbower

Timothy Callahan

Paul Crowley

Bud Folkers

Chuck & Michelle Folkers

Dave & Lisa Folkers

Kathryn Kersten

Harry & Mary Nudd

Helen Oliver

Ronni Ellen Otake

Carl Praut

Virginia Stevens

John & Dawn Suggs

Becky Trask

Sherry Trevor

Mark Trevor

Mark Wasserman

Jim & Kay Young

IN MEMORIAM

Carolyn Fisher

Dorothy "Dot" Cook Robinson

Jack Steptoe

Gloria Greer has a new daily television show on channel 10. It is called "Conversations with Gloria Greer."

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SHE'S A STAR



Velma Dawson was honored by the College of the Desert and the Foundation with a celebrity star in the sidewalk in front of the Palm Springs Desert Museum. On Nov. 17 at 2:00 p.m. she was joined by many of her friends to celebrate this auspicious occasion. Besides her community involvement she is also famous for the appealing little cowboy marionette she created. As she manipulated the strings and changed her voice, Howdy Doody invited everyone to a reception in the museum's Sculpture Garden. This talented lady not only resides in Palm Desert, but she is a long-time member of the Society.

*May your holiday season be filled with
laughter and good cheer.*

May the New Year be your best yet.

Editor: Ginny Folkers
Consultant: Theda Lundquist